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Background Information

on

THE NATIONAL STATES RIGHTS PARTY

A Service to Florida Officials

of the

FLORIDA LEGISLATIVE INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE

POST OFFICE BOX 1044

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

July 31, 1964

P R E F A C E

The Constitutional rights of the States and freedoms of the individual citizens are vital and legitimate concerns affecting all segments of our society and all levels of our governmental structure.

Unfortunately, however, they also serve as a screen for the perverse peddlers and preachers of hate who seek to serve their own ends under the guise of representing the views of responsible citizens. They cloth their totalitarian dogma in the garb of freedom, and sugar-coat their vicious aims with slogans designed to appeal to citizens disturbed by the actions of government or of the more outspoken representatives of contrasting areas of political thought.

Today's hawkers of hate have made capital of hiding behind the facade of conservatism and waving the banner of anti-communism. With their bigotry thus cloaked, they have made converts who unwittingly serve to undermine the very causes in which they devoutly believe, and those activities cannot but lend aid and comfort to the apostles of Soviet Socialism and the International Communist conspiracy, for totalitarianism is totalitarianism no matter how it is disguised.

In a recent speech, F.B.I. Director J. Edgar Hoover listed some of those groups he construed to be enemies of our Republic, and, after noting the intent and effort of the Communists to move in on the civil rights movement in America today, he said of the hatemongers: "Nowhere in recent months have our people faced a more explosive condition of shame and violence than among the hatemongers, the moral degenerates, the lunatic fringe, and the other irrational fanatics who preach a doctrine of hostility toward their fellow man. This rabble has sown the dragons' teeth of malice and intimidation."

Neither the participation in, nor the support of, good conservative or active anti-Communist movements by Floridians ought to be warped by the activities of a limited number of organizations and individuals such as those falling under Director Hoover's definition.

Preface, Page two

It is for this reason that the Committee calls to your attention the activities of one organization whose name we believe to be misleading, and whose principles we believe to be contrary to the precepts of good citizenship.

JULY 22, 1964

The National States Rights Party

The name of the National States Rights Party is being heard in many areas of Florida today. In connection with racial violence in St. Augustine and Klan organizational activities in several areas of the state, its name has been noted and its materials have been found.

Two men, J. B. Stoner, a Georgia attorney best known for his defense of Klan members, and Conrad (Connie) Lynch, who claims to be representing the Christian Defense League, a California organization, have both affiliation and representation of the NSRP in their repertoire of Florida activities.

In addition, Florida voters are currently being asked to sign petitions to their county supervisors of registration and to the Secretary of State for the purpose of having placed on Florida's general election ballot the name and candidates of the National States Rights Party.

The procedure employed is in conformance with Chapter 103.021, Florida Statutes, and in at least one county a sizable number of electors have signed petitions that have been turned in to the Supervisor.

In seeking signatures on the petitions, representatives of the National States Rights Party are suggesting that their organization offers a legitimate outlet for the voters who find representation of their philosophies lacking in the platforms of the Democratic and Republican Parties. Heavy emphasis is placed upon the racial issue and the emotional overtones it generates.

The petitions are sent out by Dr. Edward R. Fields from the National Headquarters of the NSRP at Birmingham, Alabama. Fields is listed on the organization's letterhead as Information Director, and his letter indicates that the Florida segment of the Party is headed by Dewey M. Taft of Tampa.

Mr. Taft publishes a monthly newsletter under the title, "The American Digest," the June issue of which featured items headlined "Gov. Farris Bryant, Liar and Betrayer," and "Police Refuse F.B.I. Orders to 'Shoot to Kill.'" Mr. Taft has said that he wishes it to be made clear "that I accept no responsibility for the policies of the National States Rights Party which are set by the National officers in Birmingham, Alabama, nor for anything appearing in The Thunderbolt, the party organ published in Birmingham." He has stated his position as Florida State Chairman for NSRP is "temporary" and will "expire" December 31, 1964.

Candidates of the National States Rights Party are John Kasper of Nashville, Tennessee, for President; and J. B. Stoner of Mableton, Georgia, for Vice President.

Evidence that the NSRP candidates are receiving serious attention is reflected in the success of the Party in securing places on the Kentucky and Arkansas ballots for November. For the benefit of Floridians approached by this group for votes and funds, a brief summary of its operations and personnel has been prepared from the files of the Legislative Investigation Committee.

The National States Rights Party claims it is "America's Largest Third Party," and says it is the "only national, right-wing, third party in America which will be on the ballot in 1964."

The "Prairie Fire," official publication of the National States Rights Party of Illinois, laid claim in its April 1964, edition to over 214,000 votes cast on behalf of the Party in the 1960 presidential election. The Associated Press, however, in a story published across the nation on December 18, 1960, said the NSRP garnered only 44,977 votes for its slate. This placed it far behind the unpledged elector slate of the separate Louisiana States Rights Party, which polled 169,572 votes (now apparently

counted by NSRP to get its 214,000 total.) The nearly 45,000 votes for the NSRP came from Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware and Tennessee and ranked it among the splinter parties of the country just behind the Socialist-Labor Party and the Prohibition Party, according to the AP figures.

The National States Rights Party came into being in the early months of 1958, based on tenets of white supremacy and anti-semitism. It was created and has been managed by an amalgamation of leaders formerly connected with organizations such as the United White Party, Christian Anti-Jewish Party, Real-political Institution, various Ku Klux Klans and the Columbians. At the time of its creation, one of the founders wrote a supporter that "the name NSRP will sound so mild that a man belonging to it will not worry about losing his job, but at the same time our program is much more effective." In explaining the difference between the NSRP and the movements from which it was carved, this founder said: "We have 'watered down' the National States Rights Party to a rather dangerous level. This was done in order to allow the organization to become a truly mass movement, thus giving us one year to indoctrinate our following with the full meaning of this White Nationalist movement. Without the Thunder-bolt we are just another Klan or White Citizens Council."

The "thunderbolt" referred to is the official symbol of the NSRP, and reproduced prominently on its letterhead and much of its literature. It was originally adopted as the symbol of an Atlanta hate organization called the Columbians, which disbanded after charges of subversion. The monthly publication of the NSRP, edited by Edward Fields, is named The Thunderbolt.

It is apparent that the National States Rights Party, while originating in the South, has spread widely in its brief existence. There is evidence to indicate it has active workers in fifteen to twenty states, including a number in the mid and far West.

Its appearance in 1963 in California led to a review of its activities by the Senate Factfinding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities of the California Legislature. This Committee found and reported that the NSRP "is, in our opinion, more potentially dangerous than any of the American Nazi groups."

Some leaders of the organization appear at meetings and demonstrations in the NSRP uniform, a military-style outfit reminiscent of Hitler's storm troopers and replete with the thunderbolt device on an armband. Illustrations of this from NSRP publications are included in the exhibits attached at the conclusion of this report.

In addition to The Thunderbolt, the NSRP offers a variety of literature to its supporters, illustrative of which is the flyer, "Jew Communists Behind Race Mixing," a two-sided leaflet "showing the Jews who founded Communism on one side and a Negro attacking a white lady on the other. A real shocker." Copies of this flyer have been distributed in St. Augustine in recent weeks.

Like all extremist organizations, the NSRP voices constant pleas for funds. While pointing out that the NSRP membership and support are making "tremendous gains," Dr. Fields has written his "fellow white patriots" that "for some reason funds have been coming in very slowly . . . the cost of sending teams of trained members into various states to help collect thousands of names necessary to place the NSRP on the ballot requires a great deal of money."

In a letter postmarked from the Party's headquarters in Birmingham July 6, 1964, Dr. Fields said that "at this very moment we have only about \$600.00 on hand in the headquarters account. Our budget at H.Q. calls for a minimum of between \$4,000 and \$5,000 per month just to pay postage, printing, paper, overhead, which alone runs into thousands of dollars monthly, not counting organizational expenses. What we are able to do this summer, to repeal the Civil Rights Bill, place our ticket on the ballot, etc., etc., depends upon your loyal and faithful support."

The NSRP nominated Kasper and Stoner at its National Nominating Convention held in Louisville, Kentucky, on March first of this year. On either side of the hall at the Sheraton Hotel hung large banners proclaiming "Jews Behind Racemixing" and "Keep America White."

It is of interest to note that the Communist movement never misses an opportunity to picture the activities of such extremist organizations as being typical of true conservative groups, and that much of the attention focused on the NSRP convention came from a line of biracial pickets parading outside the hotel under the leadership of Carl Braden, who has been identified before investigating committees in sworn testimony as an active U.S. Communist.

In other years, the NSRP has sought to support Governor Orville Faubus and Senator Strom Thurmond for national office, but has been rebuffed by these two leaders. Fields has written that these two are "part of the old, corrupt, two-party system . . . and are basically loyal to their own entrenched political party machine." The Thunderbolt reported the NSRP conviction that "any old-party politician, or his corrupt party machine, or his philosophy of sell-out and compromise will never carry our nation to the new national rebirth which we seek." The NSRP has

described President Johnson as "the hollow pumpkin on a pole who is in the White House. . . dedicated to stupidity and treachery."

To oppose Johnson, the NSRP selected John Kasper, a New Jersey native, graduate of Columbia University, one-time book-seller and now a Nashville automotive service center operator. Kasper has spent nearly three of his thirty-five years in prison as a result of racist activities. In 1956, he gained national headlines for his disruptive activities in racially torn Clinton, Tennessee, and became a hero of the white supremacy movement through his leadership of the Seaboard White Citizens Council.

In 1957, Kasper's image as an ardent segregationist faded when he was questioned by the Florida Legislative Investigation Committee about the activities in Florida of the Seaboard Council. He admitted under oath frequent and close association with Negroes until just prior to his Clinton appearance. He admitted hosting interracial parties at the Greenwich Village bookstore he operated in New York and frequently dancing with and dating the young Negro women who made his shop a hangout.

Newspaper stories from New York at the time told of Kasper's close relationship with and near worship of Ezra Pound, the poet whose insanity and confinement to a Washington, D.C. hospital prevents prosecution on an indictment of treason returned against him as a result of his World War II activities. They

told, too, of his relationship with Florette Henry, a then nineteen year old Negro girl who worked part-time in his book-store. She told reporters of Kasper taking her to meet Pound at St. Elizabeth's hospital and of her dates with him, which included beach parties and his exhortation to a mixed group in September 1955, to join the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, a group he now denounces.

As a result of the revelations before the Legislative Committee, Kasper's support crumbled. He later served time at the Federal Correctional Institution at Tallahassee as a result of his activities at Clinton, and, since his release several years ago, has been in relative seclusion in Nashville.

Jesse Benjamin Stoner, the vice presidential nominee of the National States Rights Party, is a Georgia attorney best known for his defense of Klansmen and other extremists involved in racial or anti-semitic incidents. He is in his early forties and has a long career of association with racist organizations.

He at one time was identified as the "archleader" of the Stoner Anti-Jewish Party, and of the Christian Anti-Jewish Party. He has been identified as a one-time Imperial Wizard of the Christian Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and as Klegal of the Tennessee Klan.

The Stoner Anti-Jewish Party was reported in 1947 to have circulated widely a promotional card which contained statements by Archleader J. B. Stoner, including:

"The Stoner Anti-Jewish Party is a political party whose main and primary objective is to serve Christianity and America by obtaining passage of proper laws or Constitutional Amendments making it unlawful and impossible for Jews to live in North America.

"The Stoner-Anti-Jewish Party believes that North America is for white gentiles only. It believes in white supremacy. It definitely proposes that all niggers in North America be lawfully resettled in Africa with better living conditions in Africa than here. It believes that all Orientals should be resettled in the Orient."

In 1944, Stoner addressed a petition to the U.S. House of Representatives urging that body to pass a "resolution recognizing the fact that the Jews are the children of the devil, and that, consequently, they constitute a grave menace to the United States of America."

In July 1946, Stoner granted an interview to the Atlanta Constitution, in which he stated his belief that Hitler had been too moderate. He told reporter Jim Furniss that he and his associates were planning a new political party and that they planned to be "more modern" in wiping out all Jews except those who might espouse Christianity." The essence of his new party, he was quoted as saying, was "to make being a Jew a crime punishable by death."

Stoner has been much in evidence in Florida since June, both as defense counsel for Jacksonville Klansmen accused of setting off a dynamite charge at the home of a Negro boy who had been admitted to a formerly all-white school (the case ended in a mistrial resulting from a hung jury and has been rescheduled for the fall), and as principal speaker and organizer of segregationist rallies at St. Augustine. He has also been speaker at a number of Klan rallies in the northeast Florida area.

Edward Fields, the principal drum-beater for the Kasper-Stoner ticket, is a trained chiropractor now in his early thirties, whose history as an agitator extends back to his teen-age years.

He has been associated with Stoner in the Christian Anti-Jewish Party, and was a leader in the defense effort and fund raising for attorneys' fees for John Kasper. Other organizations to which he has been linked include the National Citizens' Protective Association of St. Louis, and several divisions of the Klan. He was a key leader of the United White Party, a forerunner of the NSRP, which was merged with it in September 1962. Fields has held several NSRP offices, the latest of which is his current role as Information Director. Fields is not known to have been in Florida recently.

Also active in Florida at the present time, although claiming no association with the NSRP is Charles Conley Lynch,

who identifies himself as the Reverend Connie Lynch. He has been active in California as an organizer for the National States Rights Party, but claims current affiliation with the Christian Defense League, a chapter of which he now seeks to establish in St. Augustine. Headquarters of the Christian Defense League is 617 South Olive Street, Los Angeles, California. According to its publications, the Christian Defense League "was established as a vehicle for uniting white Christian Americans of all denominations for the defense of their faith and race against anti-Christian forces using the very freedoms granted under a Christian form of government to destroy the society which created those freedoms. The Christian Defense League claims to be active in a broad range of activities, including education, legal defense of white Christians in selected cases, investigation of alleged violations of members' rights, the issuance of "Christian Buyers Directories," and other similar activities. Annual membership in the organization is \$12.00, Life Membership \$100.00, and a Gift Endowment \$1,000.

Available information indicates that Lynch was born November 15, 1912, in Clarksville, Texas. His wife's name was Betty Ruth Lynch and he had been a laborer for the Lemon Exchange, Corona, California, prior to his involvement with various anti-

semitic and white supremacist groups.

Lynch's arrest record indicates he has been arrested in 1956 for "failure to provide" and in 1963 for "assault with a deadly weapon." There is a record of conviction on the latter charge.

As Connie Charles Lynch he was arrested at San Bernandino, California, on February 22, 1963, as the result of a fight at a local drive-in restaurant. The fight started when Lynch and other members of the NSRP began to yell "Kill the Jews" and similar slogans. Lynch and his companions were wearing uniforms of the storm trooper variety.

Lynch identifies himself as a minister of the Church of Jesus Christ Christian. An organization by this name, which indicates on its Ministerial Certificates that it is incorporated under the laws of California, is headed by Dr. Wesley A. Swift, whose title is President. Wesley Swift was identified in the 1963 report of the Senate Fact Finding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities of the California Legislature as participant in a February 8, 1963, meeting of the National States Rights Party held in Los Angeles. The report describes Swift's participation in these words:

"Wesley Swift was the first speaker, and declared that his organization (The NSRP) paid no attention to laws; that it would decide which meetings would be broken up, and that no one could

ever break up a National States Rights meeting."

Conrad Lynch attended this meeting and was identified
as State Organizer for California for the NSRP.

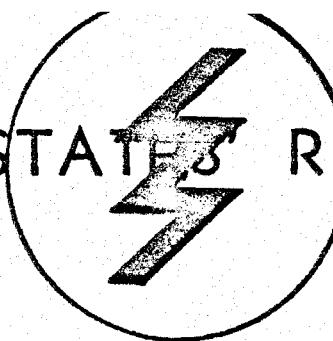
Lynch holds a current Florida Driver's License (D-422420), issued to him at 107 East First Street, Jacksonville. The description furnished for this license is that of a white male, 5'6 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", 150 lbs., grey eyes and brown hair.

Lynch has been working closely with Halstead Manucey and J. B. Stoner in St. Augustine and has addressed a series of Klan meetings. He is accomplished at whipping a crowd into a riotous condition, as evidenced by his St. Augustine Slave Market appearances. His current visit to Florida is not his first, as he has made talks, nominally under NSRP sponsorship, in several areas of the state, and was featured speaker for a series of 1963 Klan rallies in Jacksonville.

Although in recent issues of The Thunderbolt, the NSRP has warned its members and sought to disassociate itself from such arms-bearing groups as the Minute Men, it issued a "States Rights Manifesto" in 1958, recommending that its supporters "arm themselves so that they will be able to defend their families, homes and rights from political despots who are inciting violence on our once peaceful communities.

The National States Rights Party apparently believes it can muster the support of at least 7,500 Florida voters spread through at least thirty-four counties, as provided by law. Such a showing would far exceed the membership of NSRP in Florida, and means many who now are unfamiliar with the organization must lend it support.

NATIONAL STATES RIGHTS PARTY



National Headquarters:

POST OFFICE BOX 783

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

NATIONAL OFFICERS:

NED DUPES
Chairman
MRS. E. L. BISHOP
Vice-Chairman
BEN HECE SETTLE
Secretary
DR. EDWARD R. FIELDS
Information Director

LOCAL BRANCH
HEADQUARTERS

Dear Fellow White Patriot:

Enclosed are petition forms that are being used to place the National States Rights Party on the Florida ballot for the election of Nov. 3, 1964. Please have registered voters to sign them and go ahead and file them with your County Supervisor of Registration. Then notify State and National Headquarters of NSRP of the number of signatures filed and certified. File as many names as possible. If you can only get a few signatures, please go and file them without delay.

On Nov. 3rd, Lyndon Johnson, The Democratic Candidate for President, will be running on a platform to force you and your children to mix with blacks. The Republican Candidate for President will be running on a similar platform. Loyal White Americans will not want to choose between those two evils.

White People will have the opportunity to vote for a veteran Crusader for White Supremacy for President. That Courageous White man is John Kasper, The N.S.R.P.'s Candidate for President. A vote for Kasper is a vote for yourself and our great White Race. That is why we now call upon you to get the enclosed petitions signed and filed. If you need more forms, write Dewey M. Taft, our State Chairman.

Yours for Christ, Race & Country,

Dr. Edward R. Fields

Dr. Edward R. Fields

HONOR-PRIDE-FIGHT! KEEP AMERICA WHITE